

Below is the transcript of Congressman Pence's Q&A with General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker during yesterday's hearing:

Transcript of Congressman Pence Questioning of General David Petraeus and Ambassador Ryan Crocker

Joint House Foreign Affairs Committee and House Armed Services Committee Hearing

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Washington, DC

Congressman Pence: I would like to thank you General Petraeus and Ambassador Crocker for your service to the Nation. The Old Book tells us if you owe debts, pay debts; if honor then honor; if respect, then respect, and having met with both of you on several occasions downrange in different assignments, I know this nation owes you a debt of honor and a debt of respect. I appreciate the way my colleagues have addressed this hearing today.

General Petraeus, just for clarification, it seems to me that you opened your testimony today with a very emphatic declarative, I think your words were "this is my testimony." I think you added that it had not been cleared by the White House or the Department of Defense; again, we are getting the Petraeus Report.

General Petraeus: That is correct, as I stated, I have obviously given recommendations, and I gave an assessment as part of those recommendations during a week of video teleconferences, consultations with Admiral Fallon, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, the Secretary of Defense, and then ultimately, the President.

But the testimony I have provided today, this statement, is one that I eventually took control of the electrons about two weeks ago, and as I have mentioned, have not been shared with anyone outside my inner-circle.

Congressman Pence: Thanks for clarifying that. I think it's important, two quick points: first, on the subject of joint security stations. When I was there in April in Baghdad with you General Petraeus, we visited a joint security station downtown. I think your testimony today suggests that now that the joint security stations, to use your phrase, "are across Iraq." I wondered if you might comment for these committees, about the extent to which, embedding, if you will, American and Iraqi forces together, living together, deploying together in neighborhood areas has expanded beyond the scope of Baghdad, the impact that it is having.

And for ambassador Crocker, just for the sake of efficiency, when I was in Ramadi, in that same trip, we met with Sheikh Sattar, some of the leaders of the Iraqi Awakening Movement, it was at that time, I think twenty of the twenty-two sheikhs in al Anbar province had organized that effort, the transformation of al Anbar has been extraordinary. You made a provocative comment today saying that, that movement is, "unfolding in other parts of Iraq." And I think you mentioned Diala and Ninawa Provinces. I wondered if you might, each of you, separately, touch on. I saw those

things in their nascent form this spring, and it seems like both of them have expanded well beyond expectations to the good of U.S. interests and stability in Iraq. General?

General Petraeus: Congressman, the concept again is that if you're going to secure the population, you have to live with the population. You can't commute to this fight. And the idea is that wherever possible to do it together with our Iraqi counterparts, in some cases police, in some cases army, sometimes all of the above. The idea of the joint security stations is to be really command and control hubs typically for areas in which there are coalition forces, Iraqi army, Iraqi police and sometimes now even these local volunteers, who again, by directive of Prime Minister Maliki, are individuals with whom the Iraqi army is supposed to deal as well. There are a number of other outposts, patrol bases, and other small bits of infrastructure, if you will, that have also been established to apply this idea so central to counterinsurgency operations of again, positioning in and among the population. And you see it in Ramadi. For example, in Ramadi there are a couple dozen, I think is the last count of police stations, patrol bases, combat outposts, you name it, many of which have both coalition, either U.S. Army or U.S. Marines together with Iraqi police or Iraqi soldiers, or in some cases, still local volunteers who are in the process of being transitioned into one of the security ministries.

We see the same in Fellujah. In Fellujah, though, it is police stations, and there are ten precincts now established in Fellujah, the last one was just completed. In each of those, there is typically a Marine Squad or a force of about that size. And over time, we have been able to move our main force elements out of Fellujah, and also now, to move two of the three Battalions of the Iraqi army that were in that area, which frees them up to go up and replace the Marine Expeditionary Unit that's coming out, and continue the pressure on al-Qaeda Iraq up in the Lake Tharthar area.

Ambassador Crocker: Thank you Mr. Chairman. We're seeing the phenomenon of Anbar repeated elsewhere, of Iraqis deciding they've had enough of terrorists. Anbar itself, the whole way it unfolded there, is unique to Anbar. We've got to have the, again, the area smarts and the tactical flexibility to perceive what opportunities are the regional differences. So Diala, for example, is much more complicated than Anbar because, instead of being just Sunni, that's Sunni, Shiia, Kurd intermixed, and has required much more careful handling, which I must say, the military has done an absolutely brilliant job of, in an incredibly complex political-military context. But, again, in Anbar and Abu Ghraib west of Baghdad, in Baghdad, the three neighborhoods that General Petraeus mentioned, in Diala which is a little bit to the northeast, and also in Nineveh to the north, and in Salahuddin, a process underway that is conceptually similar to what happened in Anbar, but has in each case, its particular differences that have to be taken into account by the US and the Iraqi's.